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O 262146Z JUN 09
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT IMMEDIATE 1237-1238
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD IMMEDIATE 6868-6869
RUEHKB/AMEMBASSY BAKU IMMEDIATE 8727-8728
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN IMMEDIATE 2059-2060
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 5056-5057
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL IMMEDIATE 3052-3053
RUEHDIR/IRAN RPO DUBAI IMMEDIATE 0105-0106
INFO IRAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHAD/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI PRIORITY 4427-4428
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 9041-9042

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 066697

SENSITIVE

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (SENSITIVE CAPTION ADDED)

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [TX](#) [IZ](#) [TU](#) [UK](#) [GM](#) [AJ](#) [AE](#) [IR](#)

SUBJECT: KUDOS TO IRPO AND IRAN WATCHERS FOR SUSTAINED
EXCELLENCE

REF: STATE 63812

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FROM NEA ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY JEFFREY FELTMAN

¶1. (SBU) On behalf of the Department and the wider government community, I extend our sincere gratitude to each IRPO officer and Iran Watcher for sustained excellence in reporting on the continually changing situation in post-election Iran.

¶2. (SBU) The disturbing events that have transpired in Iran since June 12 were unanticipated by most of us. Without a post in Iran and given the Iranian government crackdown on its citizens, journalists, foreign diplomats, and most modes of communication, our ability to get reliable news and make sense of the situation here in Washington has proved most difficult. But each one of you have assisted us in overcoming these challenges by providing valuable information and analyses based on your expertise in Iranian affairs, discussions with your contacts, meetings with host government interlocutors, and mining of a wide-range of local and Iranian media and internet sources. Your work has not gone without notice; I personally have received messages of appreciation and know your reporting is being factored into developing our policy responses to events.

-- IRPO's Kay McGowan, Charlie Pennypacker, and Brian Kelly: Despite being short-staffed, you have ensured that IRPO twice-a-day Iran Spot Reports are timely, dispassionate and cover the key issues of interest to policy makers. In short, you consistently distill the facts, provide valuable insight and context, and avoid the fluff.

-- Ashgabat Iran Watcher Inger Tangborn: To reiterate (STATE 63812), I highly commend your recent cables providing a snapshot of Iranian election perspectives. Of particular interest to the 7th floor was your cable that captured the "man on the street" views. The view of this socioeconomic class is key to understanding Iran and Washington benefits greatly from any insight into this group into which we have minimal if any access.

--Baku Iran Watcher Richard McCrensky: Given the large Azeri population in Iran and the Azeri origin of Iranian Presidential candidate Mir Hussein Mousavi, the perspective

from Baku on the election and its aftermath has been of much interest to the interagency community. And you went above and beyond, providing a wide-range of perspectives from Azeri officials, ordinary Azeri citizens and Iranians residing in Azerbaijan.

--Baghdad Iran Watchers John Buzbee and Carrie Flinchbaugh: As a neighbor with strong ties to Iran, Iraqi perspectives on the situation in Iran are valuable. Both of you -- despite the challenges of living and working in Baghdad -) have obtained useful insights from a number of sources. Your discussions with Iraqi President Talabani were of particular interest given his close relationship with Iranian officials.

-- Berlin Iran Watcher Kari Paetzold: Not only do I appreciate your reporting based on your discussions with established contacts, but also your up-to-date insightful reporting on the German government,s reaction to the elections. I also note your timely responses, even during your weekend, to urgent Washington requests to clarify rumors that foreign diplomatic posts in Tehran were providing medical services to wounded Iranian protestors.

--Istanbul Iran Watcher Geoff Odlum: Thank you for your outstanding series of cables that covered a wide-range of election-related issues from the use of Facebook by Iranian citizens, to a former IRGC member,s belief that the election was an IRGC coup, to a perspective on behind-the-scenes election monitoring. These cables contribute to our efforts

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to understand what Iranians believe happened during the election and how they are responding to developments.

--London Watcher Michael Gayle: I appreciate not only your reports based on discussions with your well-established, well-placed contacts, but also your ability to obtain up-to-date information and perspectives from HMG officials. Your ability to develop strong cooperative working relationships with the FCO and other UK officials has benefited all of us.

Best,

Jeff
CLINTON